

September 17, 2021

Grafton Planning Department
30 Providence Road
Grafton, MA. 01519

To the Members of the Grafton Planning Department,

This letter is being submitted on behalf of the residents/homeowners of Maplewood Drive. There are an additional 98 residents, taxpayers and citizens that about 122 Worcester Road in Grafton, MA. who will also be directly and negatively impacted by this new industrial development at this location. There are thousands of other Grafton residents who, in all likelihood, will be directly impacted as many of those are daily commuters who utilize this road. While most would agree, as do we, that generating revenue in our town is very important in order to reduce taxes, the magnitude of this business and the subsequent issues that will arise are of deep concern to those whose neighborhood and homes are directly across the street. This is not just a warehouse, this will be an active distribution center. We are seeking to obtain information as to what plans, strategies and equitable solutions will be put into place to mitigate the following issues; traffic, noise, safety, pollution and property value. While many would say that this is an industrial area that anyone who purchased a home "should have known" could be developed, no one would ever have anticipated that a decision to have a 375,000 square foot industrial building with 92 trailer truck bays would be proposed, not only in our small town but yes, "in our backyard." Wyman Gordon, a business that has been at this location for the past 75 years and long before many of us were even born, has not directly or significantly impacted anyone in this residential area. The building sits far back from the road and there is a very large area of grassy land ("2,625 feet of frontage") that acts as a "buffer" in between the business and the main road. Wyman Gordon does not generate a great deal of traffic and certainly does not generate a significant amount of noise in the area at all. While there are many employees who work at WG, there are minimal trucks going in and out. As referenced above, there are **five factors** that are of significant concern that we as homeowners, citizens and taxpayers of Grafton, would like to be considered, addressed and resolved. To be very clear, we are in complete opposition to this plan.

Traffic/Safety-

There was a traffic "study" completed in March 2021 that would summarize and conclude that there would be no significant impact on the traffic pattern in this area nor were there any issues raised with regards to safety. This study was completed during the COVID-19 pandemic at a time when there was a significant reduction in general transportation due to unemployment and change in work expectations due to office closings as well as school closings.

Based on the information that has been provided thus far, this will be 365 day a year, 24 hour a day delivery operation that will involve 638 "vehicle trips" per day or approximately 4,466 every week- 226 of those daily trips by use of 18-wheel trailer trucks. That breaks down to 26 delivery vehicles entering and exiting the property every 2-3 minutes adding to the increasing influx of traffic already in the area. The use of the word "anticipated" could suggest that the increase of delivery trips by trailer trucks could increase exponentially given that there will be 92 truck bays on the property. It would seem, based on the addition of employee vehicles and tractor trailers, that this will be very disruptive to the current traffic patterns on 122 for many commuters heading west to the Mass Pike during peak hours.

To the issue of safety, the increase of travel by a large number of heavy trailer trucks operating 24 hours a day 7 days a week will put a significant strain on the existing and vulnerable roadway and cause pavement damage ie., **major potholes that would subsequently create a dangerous and worrisome safety hazard to the thousands of Grafton residents in passenger vehicles that utilize this roadway every single day.** This is not a highway infrastructure, this is a two lane road that exists in a residential area. The road is not designed to manage the heavy and weighty "big rigs" that will be traveling this road day in and day out 365 days a year. In addition, the winter months, specifically

December, January and February, will create an increased safety hazard for travelers thus creating increased accidents that could be **head on and possibly life threatening**. Rear end collisions could also be likely due to the stopping action at the entry and exit way.

Aside from the potential safety hazards, the potholes that will be created will result in vehicle damage and subsequent repair costs to the residents of Grafton, and other out of town travelers.

Individuals will, most likely, be using other neighboring streets as cut throughs, which will only serve to increase safety issues and concerns, particularly for young children or people who are simply out walking and enjoying their neighborhood, a simple right that we all have.

The March 2021 traffic study may also have addressed the number of accidents in a given year; however, it did not take into account or include the fact that this assessment did not include the number of tractor trailers that will be involved, nor could it as this has never been a factor. This study also did not take into account the “near misses” of traffic accidents in the area of the new Cumberland Farms whose entrance is located right near Deernolm and Maplewood Drive.

Traffic accidents involving trailer trucks and passenger vehicles can be the most devastating to occur due to the enormous size of freight trucks versus a passenger vehicle. That is a simple fact.

Sound/Noise/Lights

Currently there are limited issues around volume and sound in the area aside from the standard passenger cars, school busses, emergency vehicles and occasional trucks through the area. For many of us living in this area, this has become “white noise” and is relatively tolerable. While opening windows and enjoying the fresh air is often difficult due to the noise generated from the road, in the evening hours the sound is relatively minimal and often could be described as “surprisingly quiet” by others who visit. We moved to a small town for a reason and while we understand and recognize that our homes are on a busier road, we feel that we should be afforded the right and opportunity to be outside and hear one another talk, laugh or listen to music or birds in the backyard. This is always an opportunity in the evening hours.

The operation of semi trailer trucks at all hours of the day and night, “24/7”, will create excessive noise in the immediate area. This includes, and is not limited to, a loud braking system from idling trucks on the roadway and backup beepers. In addition, resulting property damage to our nearby homes could occur due to the constant vibrations from large trucks continuously passing through. The illuminating lighting on the building can also be an annoyance.

Pollution/health risk and concern

Aside from possible safety concerns noted above, we as residents and taxpayers have significant concerns about our health. Living directly across from this warehouse/distribution company that will have a significant amount of trailer trucks operating on diesel fuel, we will be exposed disproportionately to pollution and poor air quality. We will be exposed to this unhealthy quality of air created by diesel fuel, both outdoors and indoors, which could subsequently result in short term or long term health issues.

There are adults and children who live in the area that have pre-existing health issues such as heart or respiratory issues such as asthma. The increase and excess diesel fuel and emissions could exacerbate medical issues for many and create them for some who are otherwise very healthy.

Property Value

Not much will not be noted here regarding property value as it is naturally assumed, with general common sense, that no one would **want** to live directly across the street from a monstrous warehouse and distribution center that is 100 feet from their home, this coupled with all of the aforementioned concerns. Many people continue to be drawn to Grafton for it's sense of community, small town living, charm and a basic “hometown feel.” The road coming into town, which is the primary gateway in and out, will be forever changed- and not in a positive way.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this letter and it is our sincere hope that decisions will be made that will support our town, neighborhood, and families, many of whom have lived in this town for many, many years.

Sincerely,

Sandra J. Nelson and Robyn Stewart
Residents of 13 Maplewood Drive

Christopher and Amy Thornton
Residents of 15 Maplewood Drive

Anthony and Michelle Larose
Residents of 21 Maplewood Drive

Noah and Leighann Gagnon
Residents of 17 Maplewood Drive

Christopher and Heather Lacasse
Residents of 19 Maplewood Drive

Kerry Dagle
Resident of 7 Maplewood Drive

Deborah Lohnes and Jason deSoirdis
Resident of 11 Maplewood Drive